

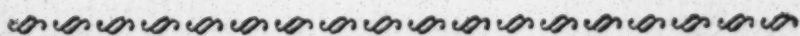
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W I T H A G O O D C O N S C I E N C E ,
B E A M I N I S T E R O F
T H E C H U R C H O F E N G L A N D .

By P H I L A L E T H E S . K

*Not walking in craftiness, nor handling the Word of
God deceitfully.*

2 Cor. iv. 2.

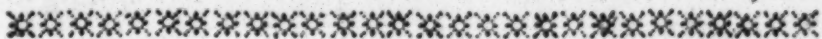


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An APPEAL to the PUBLIC, &c.



SOME time ago, a little Performance ventured into the world, intitled, *A solemn Caution against the Ten Horns of Calvinism*; in which is shewn the stupid inconsistency, as well as the daring blasphemy of unconditional election and reprobation. The Author has found it has answered the end which he expected, viz. it has excited the rage and fury of that party, and, if he is rightly informed, it has had the honour of being burned for the truth it contained. It may justly here be remarked, that the same spirit which burnt the Pamphlet would not fail to burn the Writer, were it in their power. It generally shews the weakness of a cause when its defenders fly to rage and abuse, and plainly shews either a lame cause or a lame advocate. So we find it was among the Pharisees of old, and so we find it to be the case in later times. As the truth furnished the pious defenders of pure and undefiled religion with sufficient arguments, both from scripture and reason to confute the Papists, so that very confutation, instead of bringing them to the acknowledgement of the truth, stirred up all that rage and vengeance, which did not only belch out in vile names and abuses, but blazed out in torturing and destroying flames. The very same merciless spirit we see in the Calvinists to this present hour.

It was observed in a note, in the abovenamed Pamphlet, that whatever may be said in defence of Dissenting Ministers, who are Calvinists, no excuse can be made in the behalf of those who are Ministers of the Church of England and are Calvinists; living upon her emoluments, and are enemies to her doctrines; often making the pulpit contradict the reading-desk, and real Dissenters within her own walls. It is now time to take a little notice of the duplicity of these Gentlemen, the conduct of whom certainly reflects either upon their understanding or their integrity.

It is proposed, first, to consider that the Church of England is no Calvinist, and then to appeal to the publick in general, and to those very Ministers in particular, whether they can be honest men, while they are tearing her to pieces, and yet are devouring her emoluments.

By the Doctrines of the Church I mean, those contained in her daily offices, articles and homilies.

To begin with her daily offices:—The first sentence she begins her service with is remarkable, and from a remarkable chapter, Ezekiel xviii. The sentence is, *When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness, that he hath committed, and doth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.* Here is no unconditional election; quite the contrary. Read that whole chapter over.

In the Exhortation we are admonished “to confess our sins with an humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient heart:” But stop, Sir, can we do this? If you are a consistent Calvinist, you are fast; but to what end are we to do this?—“that we may obtain forgiveness of the same, through his infinite goodness and mercy.” This is genuine Arminianism, and sound and good.

The next step is the Confession:—*Spare thou them, O God, which confess their faults. Restore thou them that are penitent; according to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesus, our Lord.* The next striking

striking proof against Calvinism is the Absolution:—*Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live.* True description of him who is loving to every man, and his tender mercies over all his works. The next stage we shall attend is the Litany, one of the finest compositions for publick worship mine eyes ever beheld, containing in it every thing which we want, and it is as general as it is full. Every evil is deprecated, and every blessing is asked, and it is put down in a single petition:—*That it would please thee to have mercy on all men.* This same universal benevolence runs thro' all the Collects; one I shall put down at large, which is used on *Good-Friday*:

“ O Merciful God, who hast made all men, and
 “ hatest nothing that thou hast made, nor wouldest the
 “ death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted
 “ and live: Have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, Infidels,
 “ and Heretics, and take from them all ignorance, hard-
 “ ness of heart, and contempt of thy word; so fetch
 “ them home, blessed Lord, to thy flock; that they may
 “ be saved among the remnant of the true Israelites, and
 “ be made one fold, under one shepherd, Jesus Christ
 “ our Lord.” No Arminian can pray more uni-
 versally.

In the office of Baptism this prayer is offered up: *Give thy holy spirit to this infant, that he may be born again, and be made an heir of everlasting salvation, through our Lord Jesus Christ.* No Calvinism is here. Likewise it is requested, that all carnal affections may die in him, and that all things belonging to the spirit may live and grow in him.

The next step we shall take is to the Communion-Service, which we find as universal as words can convey. Here we find the Priest giving a solemn absolution to all present. After he has received the Communion himself, he proceeds to deliver the bread to the Communicants with the most general declaration which it is possible for words to express, *viz.*

The

The body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul to everlasting life; take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith with thanks-giving. In like manner when he delivers the cup, he says, *The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ which was shed for thee, preserve thy body and soul to everlasting life; drink this in remembrance that Christ died for thee and be thankful.* In this solemn set of words, here are three circumstances all in the Arminian stile point blank. Here is to every Communicant, a solemn declaration; *the body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for thee, i. e.* that thou mayest have everlasting life. Then follows a solemn prayer; *Preserve thy soul and body to everlasting life.* Next follows the exhortation; *Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith with thanks-giving.* Now upon the scheme of predestination, is not all this a solemn jargon? Can any man take and eat that in remembrance that Christ died for him, if Christ died not for him; and how does he know that Christ died for him, unless he knows that he is elected. One would be apt to think, that the Reformers had worded things in such a manner, as if they had foreseen that time-serving hypocrites would shoulder themselves into the service of the Church with worldly views, and that they were determined to raise the most insurmountable fences in the way.

The next proof I shall bring of the purity of the Church, and corruption of many of her Sons, is in the 31st Article:—*The offering of Christ once made, is that perfect redemption, propitiation and satisfaction, for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual.*

I shall multiply no more witnesses, these are sufficient; but only lay before the reader what every one admitted into Orders solemnly subscribes; namely, “That the book of Common-prayer containeth no thing contrary to the word of God.” And to avoid all ambiguity, “he shall subscribe in this order
“ and

“ and form of words, setting down his Christian
 “ and Surname, *viz.* I, N. N. do willingly and
 “ *ex animo*, that is, from my heart, subscribe to these
 “ articles abovementioned, and to all things con-
 “ tained in them.” And so strait is the Cannon,
 that if any Bishop shall ordain any one without his
 first subscribing, he shall be suspended from ordaining
 for twelve months.

In the Uniformity act, every Minister or Vicar sub-
 scribes; I, A. B. *do hereby declare my unfeigned assent
 and consent to all and every thing contained and prescribed
 in and by the book, intituled, The Book of Common-
 Prayer.*

Such are the doctrines, and such are the solemn
 subscriptions required by every Minister ordained
 into her service. Now, Gentlemen, ye who have
 thus subscribed, and who are daily reading over these
 anti-calvinian prayers, what think ye of yourselves?
 Are not you very fit persons to preach up sincerity
 and truth? Have you attended, or do you attend
 unto what you are daily setting forth in the presence
 of God, and the ears of all who hear you? What
Salvo have you for your consciences? Is it you that
 are crying, “ *Our excellent Church, our Alma Mater,*
 “ and we Ministers of the Church, &c.” What
 think you of all this duplicity of conduct? An
 Apostle would say to you; *Walk not in craftiness;*
handle not the word of God deceitfully.

Perhaps you think to save yourselves by being mo-
 derate Calvinists, a kind of a quaint term, which, if
 well attended unto, means inconsistency, or else
 downright hypocrisy. By this means many of the
 poor people are deceived, and take you to be what
 you really are not, and still confirms all which I
 have here advanced.

Aye, say you, but you have not mentioned the
 17th Article; what do you say to that? Does not
 it hold forth predestination? Then, I say, if it does
 hold forth absolute predestination, it has no more
 right to be an article of the Church of England than
 you

you have to be a Minister of that Church. If it not only contradicts another article, but also the whole service of the Church, it is an intruder, and wants turning out of its place. But I am far from thinking so indifferently of the compilers of the liturgy, as that they would bring in an article to contradict every thing besides. However, I shall not stay here to discuss that part, but shall refer you to Mr. Sellon's vindication of that article.

I might mention another circumstance respecting doctrines, namely, that of Perfection, which some of those Gentlemen have thought proper to display their talents against; and yet, what do they pray for? To be delivered *from all blindness of heart, from pride, vain-glory, and hypocrisy; (excellent prayer!) from envy, hatred and malice, and from all uncharitableness. That God would cleanse the thoughts of your hearts by the inspiration of his holy spirit, that you may perfectly love him, and worthily magnify his holy name.* This is either Perfection, or it is nothing; and short of this blessing none need stop.

Now is not this dreadful, that the pulpit is made to contradict the reading-desk, the font the communion-table and the articles also. And yet these Gentlemen assume to themselves, by way of eminence, the pompous name of GOSPEL-MINISTERS; which, according to what I have seen, does not convey a higher idea than some of them have of themselves. However, it answers a purpose; as the poor simple people are made believe there is something very extraordinary, because of that high-sounding term. Indeed it is amazing to see some of very small abilities, as well as learning,* yet when they have got smuggled

* These Gentlemen pass for learned men without dispute. And why so? Why, because some have been at the University. And in others it is taken for granted, because a gown is thrown over their shoulders, and because they have a band hanging under their chin. But I can assure the reader, that neither one nor the other are
real.

gled into the priestly office, what men of consequence they have commenced, both in their own esteem and that of others; only one need be amazed at nothing of the kind, considering the thick vail which is upon the human mind. The pride of priests is generally of the most stately kind, especially when they set up as standards of orthodoxy; this was the case from the beginning; and it seems eminently so in the present age. I have frequently been told, that some of those orthodox gentlemen have no great aversion to this present world, and instances of their avarice have often been mentioned, and as “the tree is known by its fruit,” this has proved a stubborn argument confirming my opinion, as well as that of others also, in this matter. “*Now if any man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him;*” if so, he is very unfit to be a teacher of doctrines so very repugnant to his own temper and disposition. What! a proud preacher of humility! A worldly preacher of the love of God! A dead preacher of life! A faithless preacher of faith! From such preachers *Good Lord deliver us.* In many places where those gentlemen have come, there has been, and still is, an amazing stagnation to pure and vital religion. This I will prove to any one who requires it, not only in Yorkshire, but in many other parts of England. Enough, one should think, to make them tremble, lest they should come under that censure, *They ran*

real proofs of the matter at all. — I spent an evening some time ago with an Oxonian, who a little before had taken his Bachelor’s degree, and attended at Oxford four years. As we sat by ourselves, I proposed looking over a chapter or two in the Greek Testament; but he honestly confessed, he could not read any where, except in a particular place or two, which he had conn’d over, wherein he was to be examined for his degree. — Several others, who were hardly thought sufficient to be exhorters, by some means, right or wrong, have got orders, and now are men of very great consequence. So that even the vague pretence to learning is without foundation.

and

and I sent them not, therefore shall they not profit the people. Many who were simply and steadily going on their way, have been turned aside. I know this to be the case, and plainly shows, that a man very insignificant in himself may be very hurtful to others.

Many useful writings have appeared of late to stop this Calvinian-Popery ; but I find two very important arguments raised against them, and indeed they ought to be important as they are the principal ones they have ; the one is, Not to read them ; take no notice of them. Now this argument is short and full, tho' not quite complete, and the very same made use of by the Papists of old. But it need of all that caution in that way ; Truth, like the sun, will shine out in spite of all shadows. The other argument is, to laugh and sneer, droll and jest over what they cannot answer ; or to bawl and rage against what they cannot confute. To intimate that such writers are enemies to the Cross of Christ, that they ought to be locked up in a garret, if not honoured with a Tyburn-tippet, or even tied to a stake ; see Mr. Hill's masterly strokes.

Now it always argues either the badness of a cause or the inability of the defendant, when he cannot help flying in a rage. Such was the case with the orthodox hypocrites in our Saviour's time ; so we see in Acts, chap. 6 & 7. Such was the case with Bishop Gardener and Bonner. *But the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.*

It is the birth-right of every man to think for himself, and he may propose his arguments with meekness ; but when he takes fire at every thing which dares contradict his own *ipse dixit* ; when he breaks out into rage and personal abuse, (tho' it is a ready way of answering) yet exposes him either to the pity or contempt of every judicious mind.

What I have now written does not so much turn upon sentiments, as the duplicity and inconsistency of conduct of many, who assume a deal of parade and state of that which they ought to be ashamed of,
and

and therefore I think it my duty to censure them freely ; if there is a spark of generosity and uprightness left, I want it to be found. Let them relinquish their forced maintenance, and, like honest men, openly declare their sentiments, and not attempt to make the Church of England like the Mother of Harlots.

It is a common practice with most predestinarian teachers, of every denomination, to keep the principal features of their hideous beast out of sight, especially those Gentlemen who have intruded themselves into the Church, and by degrees draw those features out to light ; they well know that a full view of the ghastly monster, would be the most effectual way to give their hearers enough ; only now and then an imprudent brother blabs it out, and can honestly declare about elect infants, and consequently non-elect ones, and of infants being in hell not a span long. But very probably he gets a reprimand for his imprudence, not that he has spoken any untruth, “ but that the whole “ truth is not to be spoken at all times, till people “ can bear it.”

Well ; I shall now conclude ; having borne my faithful testimony to the truth, in which I have used plainness of speech, yet have endeavoured to set him before my eyes who bore a faithful testimony at Pilate’s bar, and who is my Saviour and Judge. I love all sincere experimental Gospel Ministers of whatever denomination they may be, and wish them abundance of happiness in their souls, and an abundance of success in their labour. But craft, guile, self-assuming, I do most cordially dislike in all, more especially in all who bear a sacred character. My prayer is to him, in whose mouth there was found no guile, to purge it from us all. Amen.



For *Real* Gospel-Ministers.

BUT more than all let those be clean
 Who bear the vessels of the Lord,
 Preserv'd from their besetting sin,
 The sin by God and man abhorr'd,
 Which cast th' aspiring angels down,
 And robs thy servants of their crown.

O may they never seek their own,
 Or trust, or in themselves delight,
 Let each despise himself alone,
 Less than the least in his own sight,
 Not worthy to declare thy word,
 Or serve the servants of his Lord.

Save them from pride and worldly love,
 From envy mean and base desire;
 Their lust of praise and power remove,
 Walk with thy servants in the fire,
 Appear their leader on the flood,
 And prop them with the arm of God.

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F I N I S.



